

Human Services Funding Committee / Community Development Committee (CDC)  
Minutes  
October 30, 2007

Members Attending: Claude Tellier, Jana McClure, Paulette Brooks,  
Town Staff: Roy Rosenblatt  
Absent: Tamara Rutland-Mills, Isaac BenEzra

The meeting of the Community Development Committee met in the internal meeting room on the lower level of the Bangs Center beginning at 7:15 p.m. The committee began by discussing the Community Development Block Grant contractual requirements listed on the 2008 Request for Proposals. Funding this year could allocate \$120,000. for social services, \$500,000 for a capital project and up to 20% for administrative costs. The committee voted during the last meeting to identify childcare as a priority. Childcare spent last year was \$75,000 for approx 10 families based on their income.

Human Services for CDBG funds:

The overview of Human Service needs include housing, health care, and child care. The committee discussed "homelessness" for individuals and/or families as a priority for this fiscal year. Questions included what the Homeless Committee's activities involved, what activities are authorized by the Homelessness Prevention Task Force, and local versus regional or state initiatives. The committee would like to see what initiatives could be proposed locally. A Homelessness Social Worker would fit the need discussed last year by the Select Board, and Mr. Nelms proposed Warrant Article.

Capital Projects discussed:

- Rolling Green Apartments – over 10% needs to be allocated to affordable housing "restricted units" in the town so that future development would remain locally administered. Rolling Green's over 200 restricted units expires in 2013. Funds to help "rehabilitate" apartments in Rolling Green could be negotiated to lengthen the restriction date. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts would want the restriction to remain for the longest time allowable by law – 30 years. This would be difficult to negotiate with the level of funding from this grant.
- A Survival Center Building was discussed and \$10,000 for a feasibility study would be practical.
- Funds could build a daycare / head start facility near the North Amherst Fire Station. \$10,000 could be funded for a feasibility study. This could empty the North Amherst School to be refurbished into housing units.
- The town could buy a blighted home, or two condominiums and rehabilitate for resale to low income families. The sale price could be reinvested, to purchase another property, serving additional families. The committee discussed the limited population these funds would service. Any purchase of property would need a vote by a special town meeting in January.

- The committee then discussed giving the funds to the housing authority to purchase a unit or two. This could be problematic with timing. The housing authority would need to put out a request for proposals and may not be accomplished by the application due date.
- Southwood apartments or Village Park could be funded for energy conservation if additional units would be restricted for affordable housing.
- There are three available lots on East South Street to build housing, but drainage problems would be a primary concern.
- Olympia Drive is owned by the town, but affordable housing would have to be negotiated with U Mass because there is no frontage available.
- Funds could help North Amherst Library become ADA compliant with a ramp and elevator.

**MOTION:** A vote to make homelessness a priority for the 2008 CDBG funds for social services was unanimous.

The committee has now determined that childcare and homelessness will be priorities for the social service funding of the CDBG grant RFE's and application.

The committee must initiate three public hearings for the Community Development Block Grant application. First public hearing should be scheduled for the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in November. Mr. Rosenblatt will place this on the town website and press release. This hearing will call for a community development strategy. The second public hearing should be at the end of December, 2007 to let the Select Board know what possibilities have been proposed. The third public hearing should be scheduled for the middle of January to offer the Select Board a final recommendation by the committee. The applications are due on February 15, 2008.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m. No date was set for the next meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Paulette Brooks